AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

1.   (Currently amended)   A method of operating a printing system for parallel processing a print job with a plurality of processing nodes into a printer ready format for printing the print job, said processing nodes communicating with a virtual disk transfer system, comprising:

splitting the print job into a plurality of job chunks, wherein the chunks are selectively sized from at least one page to an entire size of the print job in accordance with predetermined factors for enhancing page processing efficiency;

selectively storing the job chunks and print-ready pages in the virtual disk transfer system wherein the transfer system data comprises an intermediary storage for data transfer to selected processing nodes including a RAM and a physical disk;

assigning the job chunks to respective processing nodes for processing the job chunks into the printer-ready image-format; [[and]]

monitoring available space in the virtual disk transfer system including detecting a data overflow in the RAM and storing new data in the physical disk until data storage in the RAM is available; and

printing the print job.

2.   (Previously presented)   The method defined in claim 1, further comprising the step of preventing selected chunks from being added to the virtual disk transfer system when the monitored available space falls below a predetermined threshold representative of the overflow.

3.   (Original)   The method defined in claim 2, wherein the splitting step is performed by a splitter and further comprising the step of withholding chunk destinations from the splitter.

4.   (New)   The method of claim 1 further including paging out the chunks of data from the virtual disk transfer system in a most-recently used order, wherein a least recently-used chunk is read soonest.